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LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES

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INTRODUCTION

The current emphasis on housing has caused many experts to look critically at one segment of the housing field- public housing. Critics are evaluating the responsibilities and accomplishments of the administrators of public housing, namely local housing authorities.

Local housing authorities date back to the 1930's with the passage of the United States Housing Act of 1937, which set up a federally-assisted program for the provision of housing for low-income families. Though some cities created local housing authorities before the federal legislation, most followed passage of that act and subsequent state legislation enabling local governments to participate in the program. According to the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, in 1968 there were some 2200 local public housing authorities in the United States, operating nearly 700,000 units of federally-assisted low-rent public housing.

Housing programs may be undertaken by any local government, as stipulated in the state legislation. Federal partnership in public housing comes from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Responsibility in HUD for the administration of the low-rent housing programs is vested in the Housing Assistance Administration. HAA reviews each local application for federal assistance within its jurisdiction and makes program loans and grants as appropriate.

This bibliography brings together several sources of information about local housing authorities, who they are, what they are doing, and some of their problems. Despite the fact that authorities have been in existence some thirty years, sources of information specifically about LHAs are relatively scarce. Written material about public housing in general has not been included in this listing. This publication looks only at the local housing authority, one of the administrators of public housing.

I. LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES

Ables, Keith A. "Small Housing Authority Has Special Design, Development Challenges." Journal of Housing, No. 5, May 1965. pp. 247-248.

This short article discusses some of the problems faced by housing authorities staffs, large and small. Areas covered are the commissioners, architects, sites, development program, and the construction. The author concludes that the most important initial step to be taken in establishing an authority is getting the proper attitude toward what is about to be undertaken. The attitude authorities have about the over-all program affects how they will approach such matters as total costs, design, and the working arrangement with the Public Housing Authority.

Bell, Louise N. The Commissioners' Handbook. Washington: National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 1968. 92p.

A guidebook published for housing authority commissioners which attempts in a general way to set forth the tasks and expectations of this role and to delineate responsibilities between commissioners and the executive director and his staff.

Fox, Annette Baker. "The Local Housing Authority and the Municipal Government." Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics, Vol. 17, No. 3, August 1941. pp. 280-90.

Goldberg, Leonard A. "The Use of the 'Authority' in Public Housing." Georgetown Law Journal, Vol. 27, June 1939. pp. 1129-32.

Hartman, Chester W. and Gregg Carr. "Housing Authorities Reconsidered." Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. 35, No. 1, January 1969. pp. 10-21.

A nationwide survey of authority commissioners indicates widespread lack of knowledge about and sympathy with the housing programs they administer and the low-income families they serve. Inherent disparities between the commissioner group- who are white and of high socio-economic status- and public housing clientele- largely low-income black families- are one possible source of this conflict. It is suggested that the housing authority system currently acts as a barrier to expanded and improved housing programs for the poor, and instead agencies, which will aggressively advocate the interests of those in need of decent low-cost housing, are needed. Possible alternatives to the quasi-independent

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housing authority include establishment of a department directly responsible to the elected chief executive, greater federal and/or state involvement, and decentralization of housing program administration to give greater control to community organizations.

Hovde, B. J. "The Local Housing Authority." Public Administration Review, I, Winter 1941. pp. 167-75.

Meyerson, Martin, Barbara Terrett, and William L. Wheaton. Housing, People, and Cities. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1962. 386p.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Critical Urban Housing Issues: 1967. Washington, December 1967. 111p.

See: "New Housing Assistance Methods, Local Housing Authorities, and Private Enterprise", by Joseph Burstein, p. 25. Also: "Local Housing Authorities, the Housing Policy Forum and Model Cities", by Haley Sofge, p. 99.

National Association of Housing Officials. Planning for Low-Rent Housing, A Non-Technical Guide for Local Authorities. Chicago, 1938. 51p.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to indicate the problems facing a local housing authority, the things it must know, the surveys and other procedures necessary to enable it to know these things and to carry on its work. The pamphlet does not attempt to explain the technical details of the various operations involved.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. A Public Relations Guide for Small Authorities. Washington, 1958. 24p.

"Grass roots" advice from a special subcommittee of the NAHRO Public Relations Committee organized to analyze the proposition that small authorities have some special advantages they can make use of to improve their relations with the public. Much of the advice is applicable to any size agency.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Basics of Housing Management. New York: United Nations, 1969. 80p.

The publication endeavors to summarize an extensive field and is intended for the use of housing authorities and other officials concerned with the various aspects of housing management and with the training of personnel for housing management.

II. LHA HISTORY

Abrams, Charles. The Future of Housing. New York: Harper Bros, 1946.

See Chapter 21, "The Local Public Housing Agencies", p. 281-95. An excellent summary of the original premises underlying creation of local housing authorities.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Journal of Housing, Vol. 19, No. 8, October 15, 1962. pp. 429-478.

Though the issue does not specifically concern LHAs, it is excellent reading for anyone interested in the field of public housing. This edition of the magazine includes "25 Years Ahead- A Look at the Future of Public Housing", by Marie C. McGuire; "Legislative History of Public Housing Traced Through 25 Years"; "Public Housing Architecture Evaluated from PWA Days Up to 1962", by Albert Mayer; "Good Design Brings Minneapolis Success"; "Public Housing for the Elderly- Examples From Three Cities Show Variety, Originality"; and "Cincinnati's Housing History Reviewed and Evaluated for Years From 1917 to 1962", by Bleeker Marquette.

III. LHAs and THE ARCHITECT

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. The Architect and Public Housing. Washington, 1950. 8p.

Written by three executive directors who are also architects by profession, this booklet advised local authorities on how to choose architects; outlines the functions and working habits of architects; tells when to hire them and how to instruct them.

Winston, Oliver C. The Local Housing Authority and the Architect. Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1945. 16p.

A comprehensive outline of the factors to be taken into account and the steps to be followed in order to produce plans for public housing that will be livable and attractive, that will be suited to the needs of the families for which it is intended, that will fit the community in which it is located, and that will operate within the strict limitations of annual cost that public housing must observe in order to fulfill its purpose.

IV. LHA COMMISSIONERS

Harold, Raymond P. A Housing Authority Commissioner Speaks. Washington: National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 1950. 8p.

The author, one-time chairman of the Worcester Housing Authority, advises on how to successfully organize and administer a local housing program.

Hovde, B. J. Qualifications of Successful Local Housing Authority Commissioners, Executive Directors, Housing Managers. Washington: National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, n.d. 19p.

The responsibilities involved in each of the above jobs- commissioner, executive director and manager- and "idealized" descriptions of the types of persons required to fill each job.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Salary Information for Local Housing Authorities. Washington, 1964. 32p.

Results of a 1962 NAHRO survey of salaries paid for positions in housing authorities all over the country. Salary breakdowns are by size of program and position title for the 310 local housing authorities responding to the survey. The report is confined to those authorities operating housing programs only and does not include joint housing renewal agencies.

V. LHA FISCAL MATTERS

Fay, Frederic A. "Housing Authority Cost Trends Analyzed at Fiscal Workshop; Serious Problems Ahead Detected." Journal of Housing, No. 2, 1966. pp. 96-8.

NAHRO workshops on fiscal aspects of low-rent housing operations. Explains Ratio Analysis Point Evaluation of local housing authorities.

General Accounting Office. Opportunities for Reducing Federal Contributions by Maximizing Investment of Excess Funds Held by Local Housing Authorities; Department of Housing and Urban Development Report to the Congress of the United States by the Comptroller General of the United States. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967.

Joint Committee on Housing and Welfare. Statement of Fundamental Principles for Establishment of Rentals for Public Assistance Families in Federally Aided Public Housing. National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials and the National Social Welfare Assembly, 1959.

VI. LHAs and FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Housing and Urban Development Department. The Leasing Program Administered by Local Housing Authorities for Low-Income Families. Washington, 1966. 7p.

Housing Assistance Administration. Buying from Developers, A Guide to the "Turnkey" Method of Public Housing Construction. Washington: U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1967. 20p.

This publication takes the local housing authority step-by-step, nine steps in all, through the process of utilizing the recent method of housing development.

Housing Assistance Administration. Housing for Low-Income Families. Washington: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1967. 20p.

Discusses the federal-aid programs administered through local housing authorities, the roles of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the role of the local housing authority, and how communities can participate in programs.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. The Local Housing Authority and Its Use of the Direct Loan Program. Washington, 1964. 6p.

Six-page folder on the role of the housing authority with respect to the Community Facility Administration's Section 202 direct loan program for the elderly.

VII. LHAs and SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Housing and Urban Development Department, Department of Justice and Office of Economic Opportunity. Tenants' Rights: Legal Tools for Better Housing. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967. 44p.

A report on a National Conference on Legal Rights of Tenants, sponsored by the authors. Of particular interest to LHAs is Part II, "Legal Tools Which State or Local Authorities Can Use to Foster Tenants' Rights," pp. 20-29.

Joint Committee on Housing and Welfare. Community Services and Public Housing: Seven Recommendations for Local Housing Authority Action. Washington: National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials and the National Social Welfare Assembly, October 1961.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Changing Concepts of the Tenant-Management Relationship. Washington, 1967. 110p.

A special study on the responsibility and role of public housing management in tenant and community relations. Based on field studies in six localities; includes recommendations.

Public Housing Administration. Community Service Programs for Public Housing. Washington, n.d. 10p.

Brief descriptions of the local housing authority's work with community agencies and the responsibilities of the LHA are included. The community is defined in terms of family characteristics, problems requiring services from the community, and housing and social services needed.

White, Jr., Edward. "Tenant Participation in Public Housing Management." Journal of Housing, No. 8, August-September 1969. pp. 416-19.

Concerns the involvement of the New Haven Housing Authority in tenant participation in the LHAs housing projects and the problems which have been recognized.

VIII. LHAs- WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

Brown, Robert K. Public Housing in Action: The Record of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1959.

Investigates the evolution of the public housing program from its inception in the 1930's through 1956 with emphasis upon its financial impact on Pittsburgh.

Cogen, Joel and Kathryn Feidelson. "Rental Assistance for Large Families: An Interim Report on New Haven's 207 Program." Journal of Housing, No. 10, November 1964. pp. 541-45.

The New Haven plan is outlined with the results to date. Interesting comments concerning authority-tenant relationships, social services and social evaluations are included. Conclusion drawn is that the results of this demonstration program encourages further exploration of rental assistance as a means to rapidly expand the supply of housing for low-income families in a fashion consistent with current notions of individual and community improvement.

Hipshman, May B. Public Housing at the Crossroads: The Boston Housing Authority. Boston: Citizens' Housing and Planning Association of Metropolitan Boston, 1967. pp. 10-15.

Meyerson, Martin and Edward Banfield. Politics, Planning and the Public Interest: The Case of Public Housing in Chicago. Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955. pp. 35-59.

Although this is a case study of a particular American city, the authors' intention is "to describe how administrative and political decisions are made and to provide a framework of analysis which will enable the reader to see how better decisions might be made." The hope is that the theory of decision-making will be enhanced and, thus, applicable in similar situations in other cities.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Journal of Housing, Vol. 6, June 1969.

Entire issue devoted to home ownership in public housing. The programs described are administered by LHAs, including the Chicago Housing Authority, the North Gulfport, Mississippi Housing Authority, and the Los Angeles Housing Authority. Also included in this issue is "Akron Housing Authority on the Way with 1500-Unit 'Instant Housing' Program".

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. "63 Indian Tribes Set Up Authorities, Plan Public Housing." Journal of Housing, No. 3, April 1964. pp. 124-28.

Discusses public housing and LHAs among Indian tribes, a project of the 1960's. This cooperative and coordinated effort to bring low-rent public housing to Indians living on reservations throughout the United States was undertaken by the Public Housing Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

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